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TAGS: PGOV SCUL KPAO I2

SUBJECT: NINEWA: UNIVERSITY OF MOSUL APPROACHES PRT

Classified By: Ninewa PRT Leader James Knight. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).  
This is a Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

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A fresh beginning...  
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¶1. (C) Ninewa PRT IPAO and PRT Elections Officer joined a meeting between Provincial Council Chair Salim Issa and 20 professors of the University of Mosul at Ninewa's Provincial Council hall 27 November. The University faculty had requested the meeting to lobby for increased research funding and brief the Chair on their new Association of University Lecturers. They complained at length of difficulties obtaining adequate research funding from the Ministry of Higher Education. The professors further noted that the Chancellor of the University of Mosul is blocking funds to different University departments.

¶2. (C) PRT staff introduced themselves to the University delegation after their formal meeting with Issa was completed. The group indicated they are eager to engage with the PRT and looked forward to establishing a good working relationship. The Chair of the Physics Department Dr Mumtaz Mohammad Hussain and the Chair of the Association of University Lecturers Dr Mohammad Wajeeh Zaynul Abideen were especially interested in future meetings with the PRT.

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Comment  
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¶3. (C) The PRT has generally found it difficult to engage with University of Mosul faculty or staff, especially because of such individuals' concerns about subsequent intimidation. The University has a reputation of harboring Ba'ath activists and has frequently been cited as a safehaven for insurgents. This meeting may mark a sea change in that former distance; these professors proactively engaged the PRT without any direct elicitation. We will follow up these initial contacts to explore potential Public Diplomacy opportunities with this well-regarded and influential University. End Comment.  
KHALILZAD